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## **Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™ T.A.S.T.E. Tips and Information for Moms**

In October 2006, Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) surveyed more than 500 moms\* to learn what kind of information would increase their likelihood of serving their families more fruits and vegetables. Moms' top three answers for serving additional fresh, frozen, canned, dried fruits and vegetables and 100% juice are as follows:

1. Access to fast, simple recipes and serving suggestions,
2. Tips on how different forms of fruits and veggies can fit into family mealtimes, and
3. Ideas on how to include fruits and vegetables on a tight budget.

Using the acronym T.A.S.T.E., PBH has produced a tip sheet for helping families creatively optimize inclusion of fruits and vegetables in meals at home, school, work and play. When the Fruits & Veggies—More Matters Web site launches in March 2007, a rich depository of tips from nutritionists and the nation's moms will be available at [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org).

### **T. – Try something new at every eating occasion.**

- Explore new recipes that include fruits and veggies, or get creative with your own. Add shredded carrots to your casseroles, chili, lasagna, meatloaf or soup. Drop berries into hot or iced tea, hot or cold cereal, pancakes or yogurt. (You get the idea!)
- Be imaginative at breakfast by making fruit smoothies, egg & veggie burritos and yogurt/fruit mixtures, or simply putting a new fruit on top of your favorite cereal.
- Use leftover veggies for tomorrow's salad, or add them to a favorite can of soup. Yesterday's fruit can be mixed into a zesty salad dressing, sauce or fruit salsa to accompany meat.
- Keep a variety of bite-sized munchies on hand for on-the-go snacks, such as boxes of raisins, fresh grapes or berries, dried fruit trail mix and frozen 100% fruit bars. Cherry tomatoes and carrot sticks with hummus can be a tasty and refreshing veggie treat.

### **A. – All forms of fruits and veggies count!**

- In your menu, feature each of the Fab Five Forms – fresh, frozen, 100% juice, canned and dried – which are all packed with nutrients for better health and energy.
- Color your family's plate, as a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables provide a wide range of vitamins, minerals, and other natural substances that may help protect you from chronic diseases including stroke, heart disease, and some types of cancer.
- Choose recipes that teach you different – yet simple – ways to cook all fruits and veggies and spice up every eating occasion, including steamed, slow-cooked, sautéed, stir fried, grilled, poached and even in the microwave.

### **S. – Shop smart.**

- If you find that fruits and veggies spoil before you can use them up, consider buying fresh produce to use in three or four days. Clean and cut up the produce, so it will be ready to use, and start by eating the most perishable items first. Buy canned, frozen, and
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- dried for later in the week or if time is limited. They are fast and can be just as nutritious!
- Store produce in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator (except bananas, tomatoes and potatoes) to stay fresh longer.
  - When shopping on a budget, consider that fresh produce is more affordable when it is in-season. Also, look for weekly specials on fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and veggies.
  - At a restaurant, always ask what vegetables, including salads, are available as substitutes for high-fat side orders.

**T. – Turn it into a family activity.**

- Have a shish-kabob or homemade pizza night, where the kids get to skewer or sprinkle their own healthy choices.
- Choose your family's favorite fruit to make a quick and easy homemade sorbet with the kids.
- If there is a farmer's market nearby, check it out! It will be a fun trip for the kids, and the produce should be very fresh and economical.

**E. – Explore the bountiful variety (and satisfy everyone)!**

- For some families, it can be tough to find fruits and veggies that suit everyone's tastes. Use salad bars, buffets, or family gatherings to try new flavors until you find the foods that your whole family likes and then prepare them at home. There are more than 350 varieties of fruits and veggies to choose from. (*State of the Plate, 2005.*)
- Visit [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org) for great serving suggestions, tips and information on all your favorites, plus inspiring ideas for fruits and veggies you've always wanted to try, but never knew how to make!
- Challenge your children on each shopping trip by asking them to pick out a new fruit or veggie the whole family gets to eat!

"Have fun finding fruit and veggie dishes you and your family enjoy eating and incorporate them into meals and snacks throughout the day," said PBH President and CEO Elizabeth Pivonka. "After all, without creativity, we'd never have the fruit smoothie."

For additional tips and recipes, log on to [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org) and [www.cdc.gov/fruitsandveggies](http://www.cdc.gov/fruitsandveggies).

*\*The October 2006 survey of moms, ages 27-41 with at least one child under the age of 18 living at home, was conducted by OnSurvey on behalf of the Produce for Better Health Foundation. The survey has a confidence level of +/- 4.2%.*